



International Student Handbook

2019-20



ROYAL
HOLLOWAY
UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON



Welcome

Welcome to Royal Holloway! We are very pleased that you have chosen to study with us. Studying in the UK offers many exciting experiences, but we know it can also be challenging adjusting to a new environment. While things may be confusing at first, we hope that the information in this handbook will help to make your time here as easy and enjoyable as possible.

The International Student Support Office (ISSO) is here to help you get the best out of your time here.

We provide advice and guidance on immigration queries and welfare, run key events throughout the year and organise airport pick-up. All of our work is designed to help ensure you are able to settle into your new life as part of our community.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to visit our office and speak to one of our experienced team of advisers.

We encourage you to drop by if you have any questions - we're happy to help! You can also contact us by email or telephone as well via the contact details below.

We look forward to meeting you soon!

Table of Contents

How to enrol	4
Living in the UK	5
Immigration and Visas	11
Support Services	14
Teaching and study methods	17
Contact information and useful websites	19

Meet our team

Denise Keable

Head of International Support and Inclusivity
d.keable@royalholloway.ac.uk | 01784 443663

Robert Young

International Student Adviser
robert.young@royalholloway.ac.uk | 01784276168

Nicole Bester

International Funding Coordinator
nicole.bester@royalholloway.ac.uk | 01784 443003

Debbi Raymond (maternity cover for Szu Ho)

International Student Support Assistant
internationaladvice@royalholloway.ac.uk | 01784 276222

We can also be contacted on internationaladvice@royalholloway.ac.uk

How to enrol

Including

[Enrol on your course](#) | [Paying your fees](#) | [Making a Fee Payment](#) | [Accommodation fees](#)

Enrol on your course

You'll need to enrol with the College before you can begin your studies. You will be sent full enrolment instructions via email before you arrive. For further details visit: royalholloway.ac.uk/enrolment.

To enrol you will need to:

1. Complete online sign-up at campus-connect.royalholloway.ac.uk (you will receive your username and password via email)
2. Pay your tuition fees
3. Attend an Identity Check where you will need to present your passport and your visa, which needs to show you have permission to be in the UK as a student. If you are collecting your UK BRP (Biometric Residence Permit) from Royal Holloway, this will be issued to you at your Identity Check. Once your enrolment is complete you will receive your College Card, which is your Royal Holloway student ID card. This card gives you access to a range of College facilities. For further details visit: royalholloway.ac.uk/students/campus-life/college-card

Please note if you are required to have a Tier 4 student visa this must be for Royal Holloway, University of London in order to complete enrolment.

Paying your fees

Before you can register as a student, you need to provide official confirmation that you or your sponsor has sufficient finances to meet tuition and living expenses for the duration of your studies here. We recommend that you organise payment of both tuition and accommodation fees before leaving home and arriving at Royal Holloway.

If you are paying your fees in full, studying a full undergraduate or postgraduate degree and can make your payment at least 21 days before your expected start date you may be eligible for a discount on your tuition fees.

Full details can be found at royalholloway.ac.uk/students/money/fees/early-payment-discount.aspx.

Please note there are payment deadlines and enrolment criteria that need to be met to receive a discount.

Alternatively students studying on standard degree programmes have the option to pay their tuition fees in two instalments. Fifty percent is due for payment to complete enrolment and the second instalment is then due at the start of the second term (January for those that start in September).

If your fees are being paid by a third party you will need to provide a copy of the official guarantee letter from your sponsor before you will be allowed to complete enrolment.

Making a Fee Payment

Students who make payments from overseas often lose money to fluctuating exchange rates, expensive bank charges and unforeseen card charges.

Using the free service provided by Western Union Business Solutions helps eliminate these problems. It ensures your enrolment can be processed quickly and that the University receives 100 per cent of the payment you send. The exchange rate you obtain is guaranteed for 72 hours to give you time to make the payment using your internet, telephone or local bank. You will be notified as soon as your payment is received via email.

Go to student.globalpay.wu.com/geo-buyer/royalholloway to organise your fee payment via Western Union.

You can also choose to pay in your local currency with an online card payment via Epay at royalholloway.ac.uk/epay.

Once you have completed enrolment you can view your fee invoices, see a record of recent payments and make further payments on the Money channel of Campus Connect. You will need a username and password to access this which will be sent to you with your enrolment information.

If you have any questions about paying your fees you can contact the Student Fees team by email: student-fees@royalholloway.ac.uk or visit the Student Services Centre in the Davison Building.

Students wishing to join the Pre-sessional English Language Programme (PELP) should refer to the relevant webpages for further information on tuition fees: royalholloway.ac.uk/international/englishlanguage/presessional/home.aspx.

Accommodation fees

Accommodation fees are due at the start of each term. The amounts payable along with payment due dates are stated on the Online Accommodation System at halls.royalholloway.ac.uk.

Please be aware that rooms in Halls of Residence are allocated on a yearly basis. Students will usually rent private accommodation in the local area for their second, third and fourth academic years.

Information regarding halls accommodation contracts, moving rooms, charges and conduct in halls is available in the accommodation Terms and Conditions available to download at royalholloway.ac.uk/accommodation

Living in the UK

Including

[Culture shock](#) | [Clothing and climate](#) | [Electrical equipment](#) | [Insurance](#) | [Television licence](#) | [Sports](#) | [Telephones](#) | [Smoking Alcohol & Drugs](#) | [Local Travel](#) | [Cars and parking](#) | [Driving](#) | [Travelling by train](#) | [Travelling on the Underground](#) | [Coach travel](#) | [International travel](#) | [Discount cards](#) | [Accommodation for families](#) | [Council tax](#) | [Right to Rent](#) | [Childcare and schools](#) | [Health care for dependants](#) | [Local accommodation](#) | [Open a bank account](#) | [Register with the National Health Service](#) | [Healthcare for EEA students and Short Term students](#) | [Dental treatment](#) | [Prescriptions](#) | [Volunteering programme](#)

Culture shock

Culture shock is a process that a person may go through when they experience a change of environment. It can be overwhelming moving to another country leaving behind family and friends and familiar surroundings.

You may not experience culture shock initially but after a short time as you start to settle in the UK, the differences may start to frustrate you and you may feel confused and isolated. You may experience homesickness, sleep loss, appetite loss, lack of concentration and fatigue. These feelings are natural and temporary and everyone including home students will probably be going through a similar experience so you are not alone!

Coping with culture shock

- Keep in touch with home
- Have familiar things around you
- Find a supplier of familiar food if you can
- Attend the welcome week orientation
- Eat a healthy and balanced diet
- Take regular exercise
- Make friends with other international students, whether from your own culture or from others, as they will understand what you're feeling and, if possible, make friends with the local students so you can learn more about each other's culture
- Find activities which will give you a common interest with UK students e.g. sports, music or volunteering
- Come to the International Student Support Office. We are here to listen and help you have a great student experience
- Link with a faith community
- Explore the Students' Union and its societies. There may be an opportunity to learn a new sport or activity or continue an interest from home
- Don't be afraid to ask for help
- Find someone to talk to who will listen uncritically and with understanding, rather than isolating yourself. There are different support networks available to you such as Counselling and Wellbeing, and the International Student Support Office.

Clothing and climate

The UK has a relatively mild climate compared to much of northern Europe, without extremes of hot or cold. However, if you come from a warm or hot climate, the UK will probably feel quite cold and wet. It will take time to acclimatise when you arrive. The British climate is quite unpredictable! Generally the coldest (winter) months will be between November and March. The warmest (summer) weather will occur between May and September. However, you can sometimes enjoy a beautiful warm day in March or get a cold and rainy day in July! An umbrella and waterproof coat are essential as rain showers occur throughout the year. While we rarely get prolonged periods of rain, showers can occur several times in one day. It only snows occasionally near Royal Holloway, but during the winter months the temperature will often dip below zero degrees Celsius, particularly at night.

Electrical equipment

The British electrical supply is rated at 240 volts/50 cycles. It is important to review manufacturers' instructions to ensure that any electrical equipment you wish to bring to the UK is compatible. Conversion plugs are widely available from electrical shops or at airports.

Insurance

Unfortunately students may sometimes experience problems such as losing property or having it stolen. That's why it's wise to think about purchasing appropriate insurance for your belongings whilst you study at Royal Holloway. You may also need to have the appropriate medical coverage for your entire stay at the College (if on a course less than 6 months) and for any travelling that you intend to do outside the UK. You should also have insurance cover for your personal belongings, especially for expensive items such as computers. Please be aware that Royal Holloway does not insure or accept any liability for the property of students living in halls of residence. The Students' Union has information about UK insurance providers that specialise in policies for students.



Television licence

If you have a TV you'll need to pay for a television licence, which currently costs £154.50. (The fine for using a television without a licence is £1,000). Students living in a house where one television is shared by all of the residents may purchase a single licence together. You can buy a television licence from a Post Office or online. For further details or to buy a licence online visit tvlicensing.co.uk

Sports

Unlike many universities and colleges, we are fortunate to have our gym & sports facilities onsite, making taking part and staying fit really easy. The campus boasts grass football, rugby and American football pitches alongside a 3G football/rugby artificial pitch and an Astroturf hockey pitch. We also have floodlit netball and tennis courts, two squash courts, a multipurpose sports hall and an extensive 60-station fitness suite with weights room and aerobics studio. The sports centre also offers a wide range of services including personal training and fitness classes. For the complete picture visit: royalholloway.ac.uk/sport

Telephones

Most students choose to have a mobile phone to use in the UK. There are different phone deals you can choose from:

- **Pay monthly**
If you wish to pay for your phone on a monthly contract, there are many network providers to choose from and the prices vary. It is worth visiting a general mobile phone shop to discuss the options available to you.
- **Pay as you go**
This option is slightly more expensive as you also have to buy a handset, but if you do not use your phone regularly, you will save money as you have no minimum monthly payment to make and you can 'Top Up' your credit whenever you need it.

- **Bringing your own phone**

If you want to bring your phone from home then you need to check with your service provider if it will work in the UK and make sure there are no hidden costs. It may be possible to purchase a UK SIM card to use in your existing handset at a fairly low cost.

There are now many companies that offer SIM cards for international students so that you can make calls to your home country at a much lower cost. Be careful though, as there may be other hidden costs involved. Alternatively, we will have some SIM cards available for you to use. Contact the International Student Support Office for more information.

Smoking

Smoking inside public places or any College building is not permitted. You may smoke outside the College as long as you are at least five metres away from any building. All our student accommodation is non-smoking.

If you are caught smoking in student accommodation, you will be fined and could be asked to leave College accommodation.

Alcohol & Drugs

The legal age that a person may purchase and consume alcohol in the UK is 18. Bad behaviour due to excessive use of alcohol will not be tolerated on or off campus and could lead to disciplinary action by the police.

The College is committed to the pursuit of zero tolerance on the use of illegal substances to try to maximise student health and wellbeing. It is our legal duty to ensure drug and 'legal-highs' use is strictly prohibited in halls of residence and on campus and we take all necessary steps including working with the Police to enforce this.

Local Travel

Cars and parking

Parking facilities at Royal Holloway are very restricted. Students who are living in halls or within one and a half miles of the College are not permitted to have cars at the College. None of the halls on the main campus allow residents to have parking permits. For more information visit royalholloway.ac.uk/parking

Driving

Before driving any vehicle in Great Britain, you should check that you meet all of the legal requirements which apply to the driver and to the vehicle and that you are aware of the correct procedures which may be very different from your home country. It is against the law to drive using a licence that is not valid in the UK. In addition, if you do so, your car insurance will be invalidated and you will be committing a further criminal offence of driving without motor insurance. If you hold a driving licence issued outside of Great Britain (that is England, Scotland and Wales), you can check whether you can use it to drive in the UK online at gov.uk/driving-nongb-licence You may be allowed to do so for a limited period of time only. Other information is available at ukcisa.org.uk/Information-Advice/Studying--living-in-the-UK/Driving You must be covered by insurance and the vehicle must have valid road tax. You should also make sure that you know the UK Highway Code – find out more at gov.uk/highway-code

Travelling by train

If you are between 16 and 25 years of age you are eligible to purchase a Young Person's Railcard (costing approximately £30). This card will get you 1/3 off most rail journeys across Britain for one year. It may be purchased at any train station or at the Students' Union or by going to 16-25railcard.co.uk. Full-time students aged 26 and over may also buy a Railcard, although the application has to be signed and stamped by the Student Services Centre. Buy yours online at 16-25railcard.co.uk



Travelling on the Underground

The easiest way to travel in London is by underground train. The London Underground is commonly known as the Tube, and London's Oyster cards and travel cards can be used on any Underground service (though make sure your travel card covers the correct zones). You can also use your contactless payment card to travel on the network. If you are a full-time student living in London during term time you might be eligible for an 18+ student Oyster photo card, which offers discounted fares. Find out more online at royalholloway.ac.uk/students/money/get-travel-discounts.aspx Please note that if you are living in Halls of Residence you are not eligible for this card.

Free maps can be obtained from most tube stations. Tickets must be purchased from a machine or from a ticket office before you travel. Remember to keep your ticket, as you will need it when you reach your destination and wish to leave the underground system, or buy an oyster card which works out much cheaper. If you have a Young Persons Railcard you can link it to your oyster card to save money while travelling on the London underground. This will typically reduce the cost of buying some off-peak day travel cards and single off-peak pay as you go fares by a third. Visit tfl.gov.uk for details.

For a day out in London, you can purchase a one-day travel card from Egham station. This travel card covers your travel into and out of London plus unlimited travel on the tube and London buses for that day. Information on trains and fares in the UK is available at nationalrail.co.uk

Coach travel

National Express is a popular service for coach travel throughout England. National Express operates from London Victoria Coach station as most long distance coach services in London depart from and arrive at Victoria coach station including airport connections to London Heathrow, Gatwick, Stansted and Luton. Visit nationalexpress.com

Other coach services include greenline.co.uk and uk.megabus.com

International travel

Before travelling to Britain or from Britain to another country, ensure that you have met the requirements for immigration. Please contact the ISSO team for more information on additional documents and Schengen Visas.

Discount cards

As a result of our affiliation with the National Union of Students (NUS), Royal Holloway students are eligible to buy a TOTEM card, giving you access to a load of great discounts on high street and online outlets. You can purchase one from the Students' Union Reception or online on nus.org.uk for £12 for a 1 year card.

Accommodation for families

Royal Holloway has a limited number of flats and houses for postgraduate students with families. Most students with families, however, live in privately rented accommodation in the local area. Only postgraduate students from outside the EU are eligible to apply for College family accommodation and because of the limited number of properties we cannot guarantee that this facility will be available to all interested students. It is therefore recommended that you apply for accommodation as early as possible. The rent for family accommodation depends upon the size of the property. Find out more at royalholloway.ac.uk/accommodation

In addition to rent, you will also be responsible for paying the gas, electricity, water, telephone and other utility bills for your house.

The College has no facilities for assisting students in finding family accommodation in the local area. You will need to contact local estate agents in order to find appropriate family housing. The Students' Union has a list of estate agents in the local area, which is available upon request. The Students' Union Advice team are also available to discuss a range of private sector queries from contract information, problems with housemates and landlord disputes. Please keep in mind that the area around the College is relatively expensive and house prices and rents have been rising steadily. For further information, please visit royalholloway.ac.uk/student-life/accommodation/private-housing

The Students' Union website gives further advice and guidance around housing, and the costs that could be expected. Please visit their website at su.rhul.ac.uk/advice/housing/ Please be aware that there is no facility at Royal Holloway to house families on a temporary basis. If you wish for your family to come with you before you have made arrangements for accommodation, you will have to stay in a local hotel or bed and breakfast. Unaccompanied students may be housed in 'vacation residence' prior to the start of the session in September, to give them an opportunity to look for family housing. Information about the vacation residence facilities is available from the Student Services Centre.

Council tax

If everyone in the household is a full time student you don't have to pay council tax. Please check with the local council tax office in your area. You might have to provide evidence such as proof of your student status. You can download your Student Status Certificate from Campus Connect once you have completed enrolment. You may also have to provide information on your visa. Council tax is assessed on the value of a house and therefore varies depending on the property. **Do not ignore Council Tax demands. Doing so might mean that you receive a court summons for non-payment.** If your dependant does get a council tax bill please email us at internationaladvice@royalholloway.ac.uk

Right to Rent

Under the Right to Rent rules you must show your current visa and passport to your landlord before you are given access to the property.

Childcare and schools

Arrangements for children will largely depend upon their age. In the UK, the local County Council is the government agency in charge of regulating schools and childcare. Royal Holloway is located in Surrey and most students live in this county. Surrey County Council has a website which provides information about all of its services, including schools and the regulation of childcare: surreycc.gov.uk. Details about childcare provision in the local area can be found at the Surrey County Council website at surreycc.gov.uk/people-and-community/family-information-service

Generally children in the UK start school between the ages of four and five and it is mandatory for children to attend school between the ages of five and 16. Schools run by the government are free of charge and the students attending are normally from the geographical area around the school. Therefore, it will not normally be possible to apply for a school until you know exactly where you will be living.



Most school children will be required to wear a simple and practical school uniform. Details about the school's uniform and where they can be purchased are available from individual schools. There is a wide variety of childcare available for children who are not yet of school age; this includes nurseries, crèches and child minders. Information about the types of childcare available and a list of registered childcare providers are available through the Surrey County Council website. Please be aware that childcare in the London area, including Surrey, is expensive. In Britain, the average cost of sending a child under two to nursery part-time is £115 per week, rising to £212 per week for full-time cover.

The Sports Centre on campus offers childcare for school children from the age of five during school holidays and half term breaks. Information about this service is available from the Sports Centre and registration forms are normally made available a few weeks before the holiday.

Health care for dependants

The dependants (spouse and children) of a student are eligible for medical care from the National Health Service under the same conditions as a student.

Information about doctors in the local area is available from the College Health Centre. More detailed information about the National Health Service can be found at nhs.uk.

Local accommodation

If you will be renting accommodation in the local community, you may be asked for a UK based rent guarantor (someone in the UK who will agree to pay your rent if you should fail to do so). If you do not have a UK based rent guarantor, you may be asked to pay rent in advance. This could be as much as six-months rent in advance.

This deposit can be approximately £2,400 or more if you are renting a house, less if you take up lodgings (houses are rented by groups of between two and six students and lodgings are rooms which local residents rent out within their family home).

Students living in a house will also be responsible for the utility bills for the property; you will need to budget for electricity, gas and water bills. Utility bills are usually included within the rent for lodgers, however, you should check this with the landlord of the property before you sign the agreement.

Once you have moved into the property and completed your inventory with your landlord or letting agent you will also need to find out when your rubbish collection is. Rubbish will need to be divided into waste rubbish and recycling and they are collected every week on a rotational basis. If you need further information then please contact community@rhul.ac.uk

If you live in a house where everyone is classed as a full-time student you don't need to pay council tax. More information is available at: royalholloway.ac.uk/students/where-i-live/council-tax.aspx.

If you are going to be renting off-campus accommodation, you will also need to budget for expenses while you are looking for a place to stay. If you arrive before the start of term, you may be able to stay in vacation residence which costs around £19.00 per day on a room only basis. You will need to book early to arrange this.

Open a bank account

It's a good idea to open a bank account in the UK as it makes it easier for you to manage your money safely.

To open a bank account, you will need official identification (passport), proof of your status as a student and you may need proof of your address. You will be able to download and print a student status certificate from the enrolment tab of Campus Connect as soon as you have completed all stages of enrolment.

Royal Holloway has its own branch of Santander bank on the main campus. Most major banks and building societies have branches in Egham and Staines. Find out more at royalholloway.ac.uk/students/money/opening-a-student-bank-account.aspx.

All international students should be eligible for a basic bank account. This type of account allows for basic services such as payment in and out of the account. It also allows for the use of ATMs or cash machines. We suggest that you bring some cash around (£300-£500), so that you can meet everyday expenses until your bank account becomes active. Remember if you are going to deposit funds into a UK bank account, it can take time to clear before you withdraw the money - four to five working days for UK cheques and often 28 days or more if converting to another currency.

Register with the National Health Service

If you are on a degree programme for more than six months you would have paid the immigration health surcharge (IHS) as part of your Tier 4 or dependant visa application. Therefore you and your dependant/members of your family are entitled to use most services on the National Health Service (NHS) in the UK for free. It's important to be registered with a doctor (a GP - General Practitioner) near to where you live. Students living in halls of residence or in the vicinity of the campus may register with the College Health Centre. Registration takes place during the first week of the session in September. Students arriving at other times during the year should register with the Health Centre as soon as possible. Full details can be found at: royalholloway.ac.uk/students/help-support/health-centre

Students who live outside the campus vicinity can register with a GP in their local area. To find your local GP please visit the NHS website at nhs.uk and contact your local practice to see if they are accepting new patients.

It is important that you register with a doctor as soon as possible and do not leave it until you feel ill. Please bring adequate supplies of any medication you are taking and an English translation of the medication if possible.



Healthcare for EEA students and Short Term students

EEA students

If you are an EEA national you should obtain a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) or comprehensive health insurance before coming to the UK to show you are eligible for free hospital treatment. Visit the European Commission's website for more information on the EHIC at ec.europa.eu/social

Short-term students

If you are in the UK as a short-term student or under the previous scheme of student visitor, for any periods when you are not a full-time student you should take out private medical insurance (unless you have paid the immigration health surcharge).

Dental treatment

Students are also advised to register with a dentist and can get help with finding an NHS dentist on the NHS website at nhs.uk. You will be able to find the nearest dentist in your local area. There is a charge for all dental treatments in the UK but it is less expensive to be treated through the NHS than as a private patient. Some dentists will be unable to take you on the NHS and offer to put you on a waiting list. To avoid additional costs we recommend you visit a dentist in your home country before your arrival to the UK.

Prescriptions

If a doctor prescribes you medication, they may write a prescription for you. You will need to take the prescription to a pharmacy or a large supermarket with a pharmacy counter and pay a standard charge. The prescription authorises a pharmacist to give you a particular medicine.

Volunteering programme

Volunteering is a great way to learn new skills, meet new people, experience working in a team, learn to run projects and make friends, whilst engaging and helping people in the local community. Royal Holloway Volunteering offers

training and support for students who want to take up any of the hundreds of opportunities on offer, ranging from school support to conservation work.

The Volunteering International team assist with supporting international students in their volunteering activities, and students can apply to be part of this team on an annual basis.

Royal Holloway also host an annual Volunteering Fair and a Christmas Volunteering initiative as well as one-off events such as the Make a Difference Day, Student Volunteering Week, The Great British Spring Clean and Volunteers' Week. Students can design and lead their own projects too, such as ESOL Tutoring Refugees, Age Exchange, International Kitchen, Food Recycling Scheme, Sing-along Surrey and Love Your Campus.

A number of opportunities will require an official DBS check for working with vulnerable people, furthermore often the equivalent document will be required from your home nation such as a good conduct certificate or a recent police check translated into English.

As an International student you are able to volunteer, however, your visa status may affect what types of volunteering you can be involved with. For further help and guidance, contact the International Student Support Office.

Royal Holloway Volunteering is a member of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO), an approved 'Vinspired' award provider with the national youth volunteering organisation. As well as boosting your CV, volunteering can contribute towards achieving your Royal Holloway Passport Award.

We are very proud that our volunteers received the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in 2017 and encourage you to get involved!

For more information on volunteering visit here: royalholloway.ac.uk/volunteering

Immigration and visas

Including

[Your responsibilities as a Tier 4 student](#) | [Biometric Residence Immigration Documents \(BRP\)](#) | [Schengen visas](#)
[Students with dependants](#) | [Working during your studies](#) | [Undergraduate students](#) | [Postgraduate taught students](#)
[Postgraduate research students](#) | [European Economic Area and Swiss nationals](#) | [Volunteering](#) | [Work placements](#)
[Short-term study visa holders and employment](#) | [Working in the UK as dependants](#) | [Obtaining a National Insurance Number](#)
[Police registration](#)



For guidance and advice about your Tier 4 visa in the UK, please contact the International Student Support Office. Our office provides free advice for all Tier 4 visa holders, a visa application check and submit service, and other support.

Alternatively, our website includes information on the following areas:

- What type of visa you can apply for in the UK and outside the UK
- Supporting documents for your visa application
- Short term study visas
- How to invite friends and family to the UK
- Extending your visa
- Lost passport and BRP cards
- Error corrections
- Working during and after your studies

Your responsibilities as a Tier 4 student

As a Tier 4 (General) student, you have certain responsibilities while you are studying at Royal Holloway. Failure to follow these rules may put your immigration status at risk and your visa may be cancelled, meaning you have to return to your home country and you will be unable to

complete your course at Royal Holloway. A summary of these responsibilities is below:

- You should enrol on your course within 21 days of your programme start date
- Present your current passport and visa at your College identity check
- Attend all your scheduled department activities, including lectures, seminars, tutorials, lab sessions, supervisions and exams (If you will be absent from any of these activities, you must tell your department or school why you are unable to attend and complete the notification of absence form)
- Register with the Police or update your visa and contact details (if applicable)
- Keep all your contact details up to date via Campus Connect
- Apply for any extensions to your visa in plenty of time before your current visa expires
- Provide the College with any new passports/visas when they are received
- Abide by your visa's restrictions on work in the UK (further details on next pages)

As the sponsor for your Tier 4 student visa, Royal Holloway has a duty to maintain your student record and keep copies of your passport and visa. These will be taken at enrolment but please inform the Student Services Centre in the Davison Building if you renew either your passport or visa or change your contact details. Royal Holloway must also inform UK Visas and Immigration if you fail to enrol, withdraw or interrupt your studies or fail to attend classes.

Biometric Residence Immigration Documents (BRP)

If you apply for a visa from outside of the UK you will be granted a 30 day short-term entry clearance vignette as a sticker in your passport. You will also be given a decision letter which will state where to collect your new Biometric Residence Permit Card (BRP). You must collect your card within 10 days of arrival in the UK and take your decision letter with you.

If you apply for a Short-term Study visa you will still receive a stamp or vignette in your passport for up to six months. You must present your short-term study visa at the Student Services Centre if you are arriving or returning outside of the main enrolment session. Further information is available at internationaladvice@royalholloway.ac.uk

Schengen visas

If you are not a European Economic Area national and want to travel to Europe, you may be required to apply for a Schengen visa before you travel. The Schengen Visa Scheme is a scheme that allows those wishing to visit certain countries within the European Economic Area (EEA) (and Switzerland) to travel between these countries using only one visa. These countries are: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland. If you are intending on travelling to these countries please come to the ISSO office to collect full details on how to apply for a Schengen visa.

Students with dependants

Full information on which Tier 4 (General) students can have family with them in the UK as their dependants, as well as who is classified as a dependant and financial requirements, can be found here ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Visas-and-Immigration/Dependants

Tier 4 (Child) and undergraduate students who are not sponsored by their government cannot bring dependants.

For more information please contact ISSO or email internationaladvice@royalholloway.ac.uk

It is very important for you to think carefully about both the benefits and difficulties of bringing your family with you to the United Kingdom. If you do wish to bring your family with you during your studies, you must plan carefully.

Working during your studies

As a student on a Tier 4 visa you are entitled to remain in the UK for the entire length of your programme, plus an additional period at the end of your course. During your time on a Tier 4 visa, you are entitled to work during your studies, as long as the wording on your BRP does not prohibit it.

Most students on full-time degree courses are given work restrictions. If you are allowed to work, your visa will state the conditions you must abide by. If you are not allowed to work, your visa will be endorsed 'No work' or 'Employment prohibited'. There are other work restrictions students must follow:

- Students must not engage in business, be self-employed or work as a professional sportsperson or entertainer
- Students must not pursue a career by filling a permanent full time vacancy
- Different work restrictions also apply to Royal Holloway students

Undergraduate students

Students studying at undergraduate degree level who have a restriction on working are allowed to work a maximum of 20 hours a week during term time, and full-time during the vacation periods as advertised on the Royal Holloway website.

Postgraduate taught students

Students studying postgraduate taught level (Masters) qualifications can work 20 hours a week, and full-time hours during the Christmas and Easter breaks only. Once you have completed your course and are waiting for your results then you will be able to work full time until your Tier 4 visa expires, whichever is the earliest.

Postgraduate research students

As a Research student you do not have the same defined vacation periods as undergraduate and taught postgraduate students. Your working hours remain as 20 hours per week throughout the year. You would only be allowed to work full-time during your annual leave.

As a PhD student your vacation periods would need be approved and authorised by your supervisor. You would need to make sure that authorisation of your holiday is recorded and copy is also provided to you.

European Economic Area and Swiss nationals

EEA nationals are currently able to seek employment without any restrictions.

Volunteering

Certain volunteering positions count towards your working restrictions, and some do not. The majority of Royal Holloway Volunteering opportunities are open for international students to get involved with. Please check if you wish to volunteer for a charity or non-for-profit organisation, as some unpaid opportunities may be restricted by your visa conditions. For further information, please contact the International Student Support Office.

Work placements

You will be able to work full-time during your placement year if:

- the work placement is an assessed part of your degree
- your visa was issued for the programme of study that included the work placement year
- the placement is no longer than 50% of the length of your degree course

If you have any questions about work placements and eligibility, please contact the ISSO.



Short-term study visa holders and employment

Short-term students are not allowed to work in the UK, either in a paid or an unpaid job. You are not allowed to enrol on a course of study that includes a work placement or work experience. Short-term students can volunteer but may not do voluntary work. You must be clear on the difference between the two.

Working in the UK as dependants

The ability of a spouse to work in the UK is dependent on the length of the student's course. Spouses who are a national of a European Union country can be employed in the UK. Spouses of other nationalities are normally eligible to work only if the student is enrolled on a course of 12 months or more and has been granted leave to remain in the UK for at least 12 months. Their work conditions will be stated on their visa.

Obtaining a National Insurance Number

To work in the UK you will require a National Insurance (NI) number. Everyone who works in the UK must pay National Insurance (NI) contributions to the UK Government. These are deducted directly from your wages. If you don't have a National Insurance Number but have the right to work in the UK (including both EEA and non-EEA students) you can obtain one by following the process below.

Students who are actively seeking work may apply for a National Insurance Number by calling **0800 141 2075**. The telephone operator will ask you a number of questions including your eligibility to work in the UK (e.g. student visa, student dependant visa, EU citizen). The phone call will last approximately 10–20 minutes. If the operator considers you to be eligible for a National Insurance number on the basis of the information you have supplied, they will book an

appointment for you to have a National Insurance number interview at one of the local offices (they will provide the address). An interview will be arranged locally (usually within 18 working days) and you will receive a National Insurance Number several weeks thereafter. The whole process should take no longer than six weeks. Full details are available from the International Student Support Office Third Floor, South Tower, Founders Building or at the Careers & Employability Service at royalholloway.ac.uk/careers

Police registration

If the conditions of your visa require you to register with the police, police staff will be on campus to help you register. Dates on which the police will be on campus will be released on the International Student Support Office's webpages.

If you arrive at the start of term you may wait until these dates. You should present the following documents at the time of registration with the police:

- A valid passport and BRP card
- Two passport-sized photographs of yourself
- A letter of acceptance from the College or your College Card
- A fee of £34
- Proof of UK address eg. offer letter, accommodation contract or utility bill

You will need to make an appointment either in person at the International Student Support Office or by email: internationaladvice@royalholloway.ac.uk

International students who are arriving mid-term and are planning to live in the local area also need to register with the police, if applicable. Please visit the International Student Support Office for more information.



Support services

Including

The Student Services Centre | International Student Support Office (ISSO) | Wellbeing | Student Counselling Service
Disability & Dyslexia Services | Personal support | Financial support | Students' Union | Hall Life | Peer Guides
Multifaith Chaplaincy | Christian worship | Muslim worship | Hindu worship | Security

The Student Services Centre

The Student Services Centre provides a central point of contact for non-academic enquiries and services. Our team can help with a range of queries linked to enrolment, accommodation, fee payment, replacement College Cards and more! If you need any advice or support during your studies, we're here to help. For more information visit royalholloway.ac.uk/ssc

International Student Support Office (ISSO)

Our services for international students include:

- Immigration and visa advice
- A meet and greet service from airports collection during the welcome weekend
- US Federal Loans
- Specific events for international students
- Advice about living in the UK
- Global Café; an event run by the International Student Support Office offering students a chance to meet up for free coffee and biscuits, and to have the opportunity to make friends from across the world

Our contact details can be found at royalholloway.ac.uk/international/support/studentssupportservices/home. You can also email us at internationaladvice@royalholloway.ac.uk, or visit us in person.

Wellbeing

Coming to Royal Holloway will be a big change for all students and adapting to university life can be difficult but we encourage students to embrace opportunities and make the most of their time here.

The Student Wellbeing team are here to advise and guide students throughout their studies at Royal Holloway. Wellbeing encompasses physical, mental and sexual health, stress, tiredness, relationships & lifestyle choices. Wellbeing and studying go hand in hand, if one is suffering then it is bound to impact the other. Everybody has times when their wellbeing suffers, this may be temporary or more longer term. We are here to make students aware of the support services available and would encourage students to come forward to seek help and advice before the issue becomes overwhelming. If you would like to discuss what support is

available to you during your time as a student here please contact the team at wellbeing@royalholloway.ac.uk. We would also encourage you to get in touch if you are concerned about a friend.

Student Counselling Service

Short term counselling is available for students wanting confidential help with emotional or psychological concerns which may be impacting their ability to study or manage the transition to university life. Counselling aims to help students identify strategies to manage their difficulties; these are often related to anxiety, stress, low mood, loss or dealing with relationships. In addition to individual counselling, various workshops are available during the year. For more information please visit royalholloway.ac.uk/counselling

Disability & Dyslexia Services

Disability & Dyslexia Services (DDS) is Royal Holloway's central office for coordinating the support of disabled and dyslexic students. We work closely with students with:

- Specific learning difficulties (e.g. dyslexia and dyspraxia)
- Mobility difficulties
- Mental health difficulties
- Visual or hearing impairments
- Long standing medical conditions
- Autistic Spectrum Conditions

Disability & Dyslexia Services offers advice and support, and represents the needs of disabled students. If you would like any further information, please contact Disability & Dyslexia Services by telephone +44 (0)1784 414621 or by email disability-dyslexia@royalholloway.ac.uk

Personal support

Personal support co-ordinate assistance around campus and in lectures, for example with personal helpers, note-takers and book fetchers for students with disabilities. They assess students applying for medical priority to College accommodation and we advise about Library support, Counselling, the Health Centre, Careers, Chaplaincy and other student services.



Financial support

Financial support provide advice and guidance for students with any financial issues you have, including hardship funding, short term loans, budgeting and provide advice with searching for additional funding opportunities where applicable.

If you have any questions, or would like to book an appointment, please contact Student Financial Welfare by telephone +44 (0)1784 414633 / 276109 or by email at moneymatters@royalholloway.ac.uk

Students' Union

The Students' Union is run by students, for students. They have one very simple mission, which is to make student life better at Royal Holloway. To do this, they provide entertainment, student societies and sports clubs, free and impartial advice, and representation on big issues for students to the College, the local community, and on a national scale.

If you're unsure about anything with your degree, your accommodation or your finances, come and visit our Advice & Support Centre upstairs in the Students' Union building. If you have a passion for cricket, basketball or fencing, or any other sport, try out for one of our teams, and if you have a passion for dance, politics or journalism, get involved with one of our societies and media outlets. You can even work for us in one of our trading venues or our shop, or can gain voluntary experience with us to build on your CV!

The most important thing we can do for you, however, is representation. If there's something you don't like about Royal Holloway, or something you absolutely love, be that your accommodation, your course or the food we provide, talk to your Students' Union, and we can work with you and the College to make the improvements that you want to see.

If you have any questions about us or what we do, come and see us in our building opposite the International Building and visit the SU website at su.rhul.ac.uk

Hall Life

The Hall Life team are available to help residents with a variety of aspects of Hall life, including disputes, disturbances, living independently and settling in. You can contact them by emailing hall.life@royalholloway.ac.uk If you need to speak with a member of the team outside of these hours then you can visit a Hall Life Duty Officer between 7pm - 9pm Monday to Sunday in the Student Services Centre. For urgent support you should contact Security Services on 01784 443063.

In addition to the 100+ sports clubs and societies you can join, there are a range of events on and off campus to help students settle in and achieve a healthy, balanced student life. This includes socials in your halls of residence and your academic departments, dinner parties, film nights and annual celebrations. We also organise a variety of trips off-campus to interesting places in the UK. Take a look at our events and trips online on the student intranet at royalholloway.ac.uk/students/news-events or email campuslife@royalholloway.ac.uk for more information.

Peer Guides

Peer Guides are fellow students from your department, there to offer informal, non-judgmental advice and guidance about being a Royal Holloway student. We recommend you get in contact with your Peer Guide before you arrive, so they can answer questions you may have about starting at university. You can contact your Peer Guide by visiting our website: royalholloway.ac.uk/peerguides

Multifaith Chaplaincy

Royal Holloway is a diverse community and offers welcome and support to people of all religions and beliefs. The Multifaith Chaplaincy includes an Anglican and a Roman Catholic Chaplain, as well as a Muslim Chaplain (part-time), all of whom are happy to talk to you no matter what your beliefs are. You can discuss any issues with them, not only matters of faith and belief. They will do their best to see students who simply drop in, but it is better to make an appointment.

The Chaplaincy team will be happy to assist you with contacting people of the same faith and finding local places of worship and can also advise on meditation. On campus there is worship from the Christian, Islamic and Hindu traditions as well as lots of student faith and belief societies. There are also talks, meditation sessions and interfaith events.

Christian worship

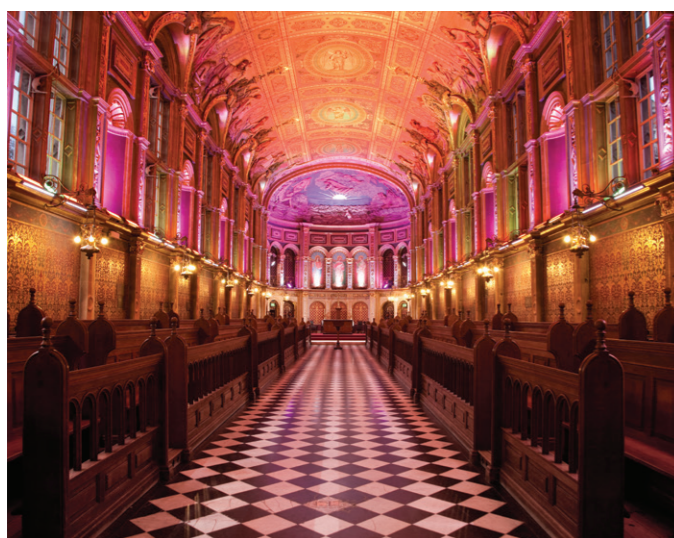
The College Chapel is located in the North side of the main Founder's Building, and services are open to everyone. Services run throughout term time and Christians of all denominations participate.

The normal pattern of ecumenical services is Morning Prayer each weekday at 8.45am and Evening Worship on Sunday at 6.00pm.

On Thursdays, Holy Communion is celebrated at 12.30pm and Choral Evensong at 6.15pm, both led by the Anglican Chaplain.

Roman Catholic Mass is celebrated on Fridays at 12.30pm and on Sundays at 7.30pm.

Students can take an active part in leading worship, and if you want to sing in one of the choirs that use Chapel we can put you in touch with the people who organise them.



Muslim worship

The College has a purpose-designed Muslim Prayer Room (Musallah) with purification (wudu) facilities located inside Wetton's Annexe (across the footbridge near the main gate).

Friday Prayers (Jumm'uah) are arranged in terms one and two only with a prompt start time of 1.15pm within Wetton's Annexe A. Chaplaincy organise and arrange the sermons (Khutabah).

As and when the month of Ramadhan falls within term time, breaking of fast (Iftar) are organised by Chaplaincy and students collectively with Eid prayers being facilitated/signposted.

It has separate entrances and space for males and females.

Hindu worship

Aarti is led by the Hindu Society and facilitated by the Multifaith Chaplaincy Team, please get in touch for further details.

The Multifaith Chaplaincy office is in Founder's Building and you can contact them at chaplaincy@royalholloway.ac.uk

Security

Royal Holloway is considered one of the safest campuses for students in the UK, and we work hard to maintain this.

We have a large team of uniformed security staff who patrol the College grounds and buildings both day and night and we work closely with the local Police on all aspects of safety. A closed circuit television system with a recording facility is in operation and walking routes around campus are well lit at night. There are a range of publications available to students, such as 'Safe & Secure' and 'A-Z guide to staying Safe & Secure' which give information about keeping safe on campus and also provide crime prevention advice.

While the campus is considered a safe place we do advise everyone to take care and minimise risk through Campus Watch. For example, don't walk alone in isolated areas at night, and never let strangers into your room or building. We also recommend that you insure your valuable property and register it online at www.immobilise.com. If you lose property on College premises, inform the Security Control Centre (FE39) and report the loss to the Police. If you find money or other valuables, hand them in to the Security Control Centre and a record will be kept.

If you see anything that gives you cause for concern on campus you should call College Security on 01784 443063 at once. Our booklet, Safe and Secure at Royal Holloway, provides more information about being safe on campus.

Teaching and study methods

Including

[Lectures](#) | [Seminars](#) | [Tutorials](#) | [Private study](#) | [Assessment](#) | [Course expenses](#) | [Departmental and College notice boards](#) | [Academic expectations](#) | [Academic Services](#) | [Centre for the Development of Academic Skills \(CeDAS\)](#) | [Library](#) | [Library and IT facilities](#) | [IT and information skills training](#)

Students from outside the United Kingdom may have experienced teaching methods different from those commonly used in British universities. Some international students may find that they are expected to participate in discussions and debates and to study more independently than they did in their home country. Teaching at Royal Holloway takes place mainly in the first and second terms and takes the form of lectures, seminars, tutorials and practical work. Field studies are also included when studying Biology, Geography and Earth Sciences.

Lectures

The lecturer is normally a permanent, full time member of academic staff who is an expert on the subject area being taught. Lectures are usually formal occasions where students listen to the views of the lecturer and take notes. Following an expert's argument will require close attention as well as a good understanding of the English language.

Seminars

Seminars take the form of group discussions. They are usually led by an academic member of staff and attended by between eight and 20 students. Students participate by asking questions and putting forward their views. You might also be asked to make presentations.

Tutorials

Most departments offer tutorials, which are meetings with a small number of students. They provide an opportunity to discuss academic work in detail with a member of staff.



Private study

Learning does not finish when the student leaves the classroom. Students will be expected to do many hours of private study, such as reading, researching and writing essays or projects.

Assessment

Assessment varies with programmes of study. In some cases assessment is by coursework. In other cases it is by examinations, or sometimes it can be a combination of both.

Students will normally be informed about the assessment methods of their course during the departmental orientation sessions. Examinations take place in the summer term. Students are only permitted to sit examinations if they have fulfilled all coursework and attendance requirements. Therefore it is important for you to understand what you must attend and what coursework you must complete. If you have any questions or concerns about the requirements of your course, you should speak to your Personal Advisor in your department. You won't be able to progress to your next academic year if you do not successfully complete all your end of year assessments.

Find out more at royalholloway.ac.uk/students/study/exams

Course expenses

In addition to your tuition fees, you can expect some other academic expenses and should therefore budget for items such as books, notebooks, paper, pens and photocopying. What you need to buy will depend upon your course and department. As an example, some students will be required to purchase lab coats and protective eyewear for laboratory work, and some students may have to pay expenses for field trips or for study abroad. Other students may be required to attend films or stage productions. Your academic department should be able to advise you about the expenses you are likely to have on your course.

Postgraduate students should allow for additional expenses such as travel associated with conferences and thesis presentation of their research.

Departmental and College notice boards

Students are responsible for keeping themselves informed of events, activities, changes to lecture schedules, etc. that are posted on departmental or College notice boards. You must regularly check your Royal Holloway email account and the information displayed on notice boards; the details they provide may be helpful and important.

Academic expectations

An information session for international students on Academic Expectations in the UK will be held during Orientation and Welcome Week

Academic Services

Centre for the Development of Academic Skills (CeDAS)

CeDAS offers a range of courses, workshops and one-to-one tutorials that aim to ensure all students at Royal Holloway reach their full academic potential. These include the following:

- Academic Writing and Communication
- Academic English for International students
- Contemporary Britain courses
- Maths, Stats, and Numeracy
- One-to-one Writing Tutorials

In addition, the Centre manages and teaches the Pre-sessional English Language Programme.

For students who wish to study abroad as part of their Royal Holloway degree, CeDAS are also responsible for facilitating Study Abroad opportunities for Royal Holloway students during their degrees. It also supports incoming visiting students during their time here. Further details on all of the information above can be found at royalholloway.ac.uk/cedas

Library

With a large part of your academic life spent in self-directed study you will almost certainly be making firm friends with the university library.

Our new library, part of the Emily Wilding Davison Building, opened its doors in September 2017. The Library is open 24/7 during term time and houses a teaching collection for key reading list materials as well as the rest of the library

collections. It contains over 1,150 study spaces, 250 PCs, 15 bookable group study rooms, as well as collaborative work areas and lots of silent study spaces.

Library and IT facilities

Our IT and library services work together to provide you with integrated support, throughout your time at Royal Holloway. We continually invest in the very latest technology and resources and encourage student feedback to ensure that we are meeting your needs effectively. We offer:

- IT support
- free Wi-Fi network across campus
- easily accessible IT services when off campus, including your life-long email and secure file storage
- free access to the printed and electronic resources and study space facilities of Senate House Library – one of the world's most significant collections in the arts, humanities and social sciences. Visit senatehouselibrary.ac.uk for more information
- several hundred open access PCs with printing photocopying facilities – many available 24/7
- online teaching including lecture notes, exercises and lecture recordings.

The library is a one-stop shop for library and IT queries, also providing a free drop-in clinic for your own mobile devices and laptops. IT support experts are available over the phone, by email, online chat and in person.

IT and information skills training

We offer a comprehensive programme of IT and information skills training. Sessions start at induction level and are designed to enhance and develop research and information skills to assist you with your essays, dissertation and project work throughout your degree programme and into the workplace. For more information visit royalholloway.ac.uk/it

Contact information and useful websites

College Switchboard

+44 (0)1784 434455 (0 from an internal phone)

Student Services Centre, Davison Building

+44 (0)1784 276641

studentservices@royalholloway.ac.uk

Admissions Office

+44 (0)1784 414944

study@royalholloway.ac.uk

Disability & Dyslexia Services

+44 (0)1784 443966

disability-dyslexia@royalholloway.ac.uk

International Student Support Office (ISSO)

+44 (0)1784 276222

internationaladvice@royalholloway.ac.uk

International Student Support at RHUL

Students' Union

+44 (0)1784 276700

www.su.rhul.ac.uk

Students' Union Royal Holloway University of London

The Careers & Employability Service

+44 (0) 1784 443073

careers@royalholloway.ac.uk

royalholloway.ac.uk/careers

Student Wellbeing

+44 (0) 1784 443394

wellbeing@royalholloway.ac.uk

Royal Holloway Health & Wellbeing,
Royal Holloway Campus Watch

Financial Welfare & Funding Advice

+44(0)1784 414633 or +44(0)1784 276109

moneymatters@royalholloway.ac.uk

Volunteering

Office: 01784 414 078 / 01784 276 718

Mobile: 07799 378 052

volunteering@royalholloway.ac.uk

royalholloway.ac.uk/volunteering

RHUL Community Action

Library

01784 443323

library@royalholloway.ac.uk

royalholloway.ac.uk/library

CeDAS

+44 (0)1784 443368

CeDAS@royalholloway.ac.uk

royalholloway.ac.uk/cedas

University Health Centre – Founder's East 1st Floor

Reception – 01784 443131

healthcentre@royalholloway.ac.uk

WAMCCG.RHHealthCentre@nhs.net

Email should not to be used to make appointments

Out of Hours

01753 865773

(Please note this is service is only available to you if you have registered with the Health Centre. Contact your local Health Centre if you need to see a Doctor).

Residential Support

residentialsupport@royalholloway.ac.uk

Further information on departments and services at the College can be found on the Royal Holloway website at royalholloway.ac.uk.

The United Kingdom Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA)

UKCISA offers information and advice to international students who are studying or considering studying in the UK. Their website offers information on a wide range of issues of interest to international students, and can be found at ukcisa.org.uk

Student helpline: +44 (0)207 1079922 (Monday–Friday, 1–4pm)

Useful government websites

For information about who needs a visa to enter the UK and how to apply, visit ukvisas.gov.uk.

For information on leave to remain in the UK, including application forms, visit homeoffice.gov.uk.

For information on local county government services including schools and registered childcare, visit surreycc.gov.uk.

For information about driving licences in the UK, car registration and taxes, visit dvla.gov.uk.

Travel information

For information about rail travel and train times, visit nationalrail.co.uk.

For information about bus services near Royal Holloway, including service route maps and journey planner, visit travelinesoutheast.org.uk.

For information from the National Health Service on conditions, treatments, local services and healthy living, visit nhs.uk.

For information on inter-city and airport link bus services including those from Stansted and Luton airports, visit nationalexpress.com.

For information about travelling in and around London, including buses, river services and the Docklands Light Railway (DLR), visit tfl.gov.uk.

The British Council

For information about British Council activities and a list of offices worldwide, please visit britishcouncil.org.



Royal Holloway, University of London
Egham, Surrey, TW20 0EX
+44 (0)1784 434455
royalholloway.ac.uk